



# Global Immigration alert

December 2024

## United Kingdom

### Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules - November 2024

#### Executive summary

On 26 November 2024, the UK government published a Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules, impacting Colombian nationals and individuals staying in the UK pursuant to the Ukraine Extension scheme, among others. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) also confirmed that effective this date, all eligible non-European nationals are eligible to apply for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA).

#### Key developments

- ▶ *New visa requirement for Colombian nationals.* Starting 26 November 2024, Colombian nationals must obtain a visa to travel to, or transit through, the UK.
- ▶ *Ukraine schemes*
  - ▶ *Extension schemes:* The authorities will stop accepting applications under the existing Ukraine Extension scheme on 4 February 2025, and eligible individuals will be able to apply under the new Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme starting 5 February 2025. Those who hold leave under the current scheme may apply for an additional 18 months of leave to stay under the new scheme.
  - ▶ *PTT letters:* Effective 26 November 2024, individuals who hold permission under a Ukraine scheme can no longer submit permission to travel (PTT) letters in lieu of providing their biometrics. They must visit a visa application center in Ukraine to complete the biometrics process prior to traveling to the UK. The UK authorities temporarily issued PTT letters, as part of an "exceptional biometric deferral application process," to individuals who were unable to complete the biometrics process

in Ukraine due to the ongoing crisis. The authorities stopped issuing new PTT letters on 7 December 2023.

- ▶ *Long Residence.* Effective 26 November 2024, time spent in the UK pursuant to a Ukraine scheme will not be counted toward the period of stay required to qualify for Long Residence.
- ▶ *ETA.* Under this scheme, individuals traveling to, or transiting through, the UK without a visa are required to obtain an ETA before entering the UK. Previously, the ETA scheme was applicable to nationals of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The ETA will be extended to additional categories of individuals in the upcoming months:
  - ▶ All eligible European nationals: These individuals will be eligible to apply for an ETA starting 5 March 2025. From 2 April 2025, they will mandatorily require an ETA.
  - ▶ All eligible non-European nationals: These individuals became eligible to apply for an ETA on 26 November 2024. From 8 January 2025, they will mandatorily require an ETA.
  - ▶ See [here](#) for a full list of impacted nationalities.

#### Impact on employers

Employers may review the entry requirements for Colombian employees and assist them with obtaining a visa. They may also assess whether foreign employees require an ETA to enter or transit through the UK and update their workforce policies (if required) ahead of the upcoming changes.

## Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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